

Miss. chapter rated tops



TOP CHAPTER — Congratulating Sandi Lewis (second from left), site coordinator for Christian Women's Job Corps of Philadelphia, on the chapter's outstanding site award are (from left) Tammy Anderson, missions consultant for Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU); Sandra Nash, state CWJC/Christian Men's Job Corps coordinator for Mississippi WMU; and Jean Roberson, ministry consultant for national WMU in Birmingham. (Special photo courtesy of national WMU)

Philadelphia CWJC receives honor from WMU Foundation

BIRMINGHAM, AL. (Special) — Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) of Philadelphia was recently recognized as a top chapter of the national organization and received a merit award from the Woman's Missionary

Union (WMU) Foundation in Birmingham.

CWJC of Philadelphia is one of more than 200 registered and certified CWJC/Christian Men's Job Corps (CMJC) sites across the country. CWJC and CMJC

are ministries of WMU that seek to equip women and men, in a Christian context, for life and employment.

Each participant is engaged in a weekly Bible study and is paired with a mentor for encouragement and accountability. Women mentor women in CWJC and men

see CWJC on p. 9

Bootcamp encourages, equips

Tony Martin
Associate Editor

The ONE8 Network sponsored a boot camp designed to engage networking among church planters and pastors Aug. 27 – 28 at Longview Point Church in Hernando. ONE8 is a cooperating network of like-minded Southern Baptist churches across Mississippi and the Mid-South working together to advance the gospel by planting new churches and equipping existing churches for multiplication. Their vision is to partner with churches, associations, and state conventions to help initiate a church planting

see BOOTCAMP on p. 8



BREAKING FALLOW GROUND — Featured speaker Tony Merida addresses the participants at the ONE8 boot camp Aug. 27 at Longview Point Church in Hernando. The event was designed to engage networking among church planters and pastors and to equip planters for their ministry. (Special to The Baptist Record)

J. Ralph Noonkester, former WCU head, dies in Hattiesburg

HATTIESBURG, Ms. (Special) — J. Ralph Noonkester, president emeritus of Baptist-affiliated William Carey University in Hattiesburg, died September 30, after a brief illness.

Noonkester was professor of religion, dean and, from 1956-1989, president of William Carey College (now University). He guided the trustees of William Carey College as they made it one of the first private colleges in the Gulf South to voluntarily achieve racial integration in 1965.

Noonkester's tenure as president witnessed establishment of campus sites in New Orleans (1969) and on the Mississippi Gulf Coast (1976). He received recognition for his work from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education in 1980.

He retired from William Carey College in 1989 and was named president emeritus.

Born on June 10, 1924 in Flatridge, Va., Noonkester graduated from Oak Hill Academy in Mouth of Wilson, Virginia and attended Marion College in Marion, Va. In 1944, he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in English and sociology from the University of Richmond in Virginia and was elected Phi Beta Kappa. He earned Th.M. and Ph.D. degrees at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Noonkester served as minister of education at First Church of Charlottesville, Va., before accepting a teaching position at Mississippi Woman's College (now William Carey University). When Mississippi Woman's College became co-educational in 1954, it was Noonkester's idea to change its name to William Carey College reflecting the educational vision of the missionary to India, William Carey (1761-1834).

While president of the Hattiesburg Chamber of Commerce in 1966, Noonkester led a fund-raising effort to rebuild the home of civil rights martyr Vernon Dahmer Sr., who died from injuries received when marauders firebombed his home in January of that year.

Noonkester served as president of the Mississippi Association of Colleges, the Mississippi Foundation of Independent Colleges, and the Hattiesburg United Way, and was a member of the Hatties-



NOONKESTER

burg Kiwanis Club and the Hattiesburg Civic Association.

Noonkester served on the board of directors of First Mississippi National Bank and BancorpSouth. He received the Silver Beaver Award from the Boy Scouts of America. In 2012, he received the Martin Luther King, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award from the Mu Gamma Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha.

Noonkester was a member of the Newcomen Society and Omicron Delta Kappa. He served on the boards of trustees of the Hattiesburg Public Schools and Southern Seminary. He chaired the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention and guided several Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Another election is upon us

Every generation of Americans blessed with the privilege of suffrage has likely had occasion to believe that their votes were crucial to the future of the Republic. Given the many political crossroads we have confronted in our short history, they were probably right.

There was the fateful election of 1860, when the elevation of Abraham Lincoln to the U.S. presidency brought to a deadly climax one of the most contentious and destructive issues to have ever faced the country. The ultimate result was the bloodiest conflict in which the U.S. has ever been involved and, sadly, it was among ourselves.

Not as historically well-known is the election of 1864, which returned Lincoln to power but also propelled Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's vice-president, into the presidency when Lincoln was assassinated. Johnson's hardball political bungling of Reconstruction was certainly a major contributing factor to more than one hundred years of the worst kind of divisiveness in our public discourse.

In 1932, destitute American voters elected Franklin D. Roosevelt, who promised to pull the country back from the brink of economic and social collapse. Many students of the era credit Roosevelt with doing just that, while others believe his heavy-handedness prolonged the Great Depression and its hardships. Either way, most people would agree that his dyastic reign as president changed the country in ways that are still with us today.

Elections have consequences. Elections in a democratic republic like the United States have consequences that can last for a long time. Our generation has just such an election facing us in a few short weeks.

Nothing as monumental as the future of slavery, or the rebuilding of a war-ravaged country, or the last-chance economic revitalization of the world is on the ballot this time, but November 6 will indeed be a fateful election that could well determine the future of this country.

The headlines scream, "Election 2012: Fate of Universal Health Care To Be Determined," and "Can Another Stimulus Save the Country?" Commentators of all and various stripes warn us that American society hangs in the balance. Reports of ral-

lies across the country that espouse completely different views of the country are commonplace on nightly news broadcasts.

The Ruling Class in Washington does not seem to have much respect for us, often with good reason. Former Democrat Party presidential candidate John Kerry, a U.S. Senator from Massachusetts, told a reporter for The Boston Globe a couple of years ago, "We have an electorate that doesn't always pay that much attention to what's going on, so people are influenced by a simple slogan rather than the facts or the truth or what's happening."

U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada, speaking at the opening of the new Visitor's Center at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, said, "My staff has always said, 'Don't say this,' but I'm going to say it again because it's so descriptive because it's true. In the summertime, because (of) the high humidity and how hot it gets here, you could literally smell the tourists coming into the Capitol, and that may be descriptive but it's true. Well, that is no longer going to be necessary."

The manifold insults and slights generated by political elitists who are technically employees of the very people they are offending, are matched only by the pronouncements of Hollywood types who, like many of our elected leaders, believe they have been magically granted some intellectual superiority over average Americans.

Much is at stake in this election for American Christians. Some of the Talking Heads have said that social issues have almost no bearing in this election, that this election is about foreign policy and taxes and the scope of government. Don't believe them.

The people we elect to office on November 6 will be representing us in debates on abortion, gambling, drug legalization, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, sanctity of marriage, and a host of other issues that will drive the direction of this country for a long time to come and determine the civic value of the lives our children and grandchildren will lead.

Vote on November 6. Choose wisely after much prayer. It's that important. Like always, a lot is at stake.

The fatwa against free speech

Part 2 of 2

The Internet and social media have the potential to give (blasphemy) codes unlimited reach: Muslim reformers cannot escape being attacked even in exile. In 2006, a group called Al-Munasirun li Rasul al Allah — previously unknown, and now thought to be based in Egypt — used e-mail to threaten more than 30 prominent Muslim reformers in the West. Among the targets were renowned Egyptian human rights advocate Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Sheikh Subhy Mansour, an imam who was imprisoned and had to flee Egypt after opposing the death penalty as a punishment for apostasy. They were pronounced "guilty of apostasy, unbelief, and denial of the Islamic established facts" and given three days to "announce their repentance" or be killed. The e-mail included their addresses and the names of their spouses and children.

The New Media also provide new outlets for people to commit blasphemy, including people who live in the Muslim world. The first blogger convicted for blasphemy was Egyptian Kareem Amer, a Muslim who was sentenced in February 2007 to three years of imprisonment for insulting Islam. His offense was to criticize the treatment of Copts.

With the Arab Spring, blasphemy on social media has proliferated. Even as rioters raged outside our embassy in Egypt, an Egyptian court was handing down a three-year prison sentence to Coptic Christian Bishop Kamel, a teacher from the city of Sohag, for posting cartoons deemed insulting toward Muhammad on his Facebook page (he was given an additional three years for insulting Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi and an Egyptian prosecutor). At the same time, Albert Saber, a 25-year-old Egyptian Coptic activist, was arrested and reportedly tortured for insulting religion after allegedly posting on his Facebook page the anti-Muhammad YouTube trailer. And Gamal Abdou Massoud, a 17-year-old Copt from the city of Asyut, is serving a three-year sentence imposed last May for insulting Islam when he posted cartoons lampooning Muhammad on Facebook. In response, outraged local Muslims had rioted with impunity in Asyut, burning homes and injuring several Christians.

In 2011, Naguib Sawiris, the Coptic founder of a liberal party and one of Egypt's



Guest opinion
with Nina Shea

richest men, was accused by Islamist lawyers of offending Islam; charges were eventually dismissed on procedural grounds. He had tweeted a cartoon of Mickey and Minnie Mouse dressed in conservative Islamic garb. Hamza Kashgari, a Saudi columnist whose tweets of an imaginary conversation expressing religious doubt to Islam's prophet prompted an Internet petition calling for his death, was arrested last February in Malaysia. He was extradited to Saudi Arabia and placed in solitary confinement in a Riyadh prison, and his fate is unknown. In June, a Turkish court charged Fazil Say, a composer and concert pianist, for a single tweet poking fun at a literal conception of paradise.

Pakistan, with its strict blasphemy laws, has struggled to censor its tech-savvy population. Overwhelmed by the sheer number of cases, as well as the accompanying rioting, the government has turned to temporary blanket bans on the offending media. Last May, Pakistan blocked Twitter for a day, accusing it of promoting a "blasphemous" cartoon contest on Facebook. The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority reportedly then engaged in talks with Twitter to remove all "objectionable" content. Pakistan banned Facebook for two weeks in 2010 for a similar cartoon contest; at the same time it banned YouTube and hundreds of other websites and services. Last month, Pakistan succeeded in having Google block access within its borders to Innocence of Muslims. Nevertheless, riots led by Pakistan's Jamaat-e-Islami and al-Qaeda-linked groups against American interests escalated, prompting the U.S. to run TV ads on seven channels with President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and ordinary Americans denouncing the video. The riots also prompted Islamabad to jam cell phone service in 15 major cities, affecting millions.

There can be little doubt: To comply

see SHEA on p. 9

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DOING BATTLE — Vice President Joe Biden (left), a Democrat, and Republican challenger U.S. Congressman Paul Ryan squared off in the Oct. 11 vice-presidential debate during which Biden reminded voters of the importance of the upcoming election to the direction of the U.S. Supreme Court. (BP photo)

Supreme Court questions may be answered in upcoming election

WASHINGTON (BP) — The future makeup of the U.S. Supreme Court has received little attention this presidential election cycle, despite the fact that four justices are in their 70s and the court is deeply divided on a whole range of critical issues including abortion and same sex marriage.

Discussion on the court's future makeup could be making a comeback, however, thanks to U.S. Vice President Joe Biden raising the issue in the Oct. 11 vice-presidential debate by saying *Roe v. Wade* is on the line and "the next president will" get to replace "one or two Supreme Court nominees."

That remains to be seen, although the odds are that with the ages of the court's present members, at least one justice will retire — which would either strengthen the court's *Roe* majority or tip the balance to set up a reversal of the 1973 decision that legalized abortion nationwide.

Jordan Lorence, an attorney who has argued a case before the Supreme Court, told Baptist Press that three issues are at play in determining whether a justice retires: age, health, and the political party of the sitting president.

Four justices are in their 70s: Ruth Bader Ginsburg (79), Antonin Scalia (76), Anthony Kennedy (76), and Stephen Breyer (74). Three of them — Ginsburg, Kennedy, and Breyer — are on record as supporting *Roe*. Scalia has called for its reversal.

If the court currently has a 5-4 pro-*Roe* majority, as many court-watchers surmise, then the retirement of any one of those four could have a major impact on legalized abortion.

U.S. President Barack Obama and Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney have made no guarantees on court nominees, but both have implied they would seek

nominees who agree with their judicial philosophy as well as their beliefs on *Roe*.

Obama supports *Roe* while Romney opposes it.

"If Romney gets to pick Ginsburg's replacement or even Kennedy's replacement, that would be a huge shift," said Lorence, who works with the Alliance Defending Freedom, "and if President Obama picks the replacement for Scalia, that, too, would cause a huge shift on the court."

Ginsburg seems to be the most likely one to retire. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2009 and underwent chemotherapy and surgery, and reportedly had a healthy recovery.

Ginsburg may even have a targeted retirement date. She has said she wants to stay on long enough so that her court tenure would surpass that of Louis Brandeis, the first Jewish member of the court who, like Ginsburg, was nominated at age 60 and retired at age 82. Ginsburg, also Jewish, would surpass Brandeis in 2015.

Scalia, Kennedy, and Breyer have made no hints about potential retirement.

Historically, justices have timed their retirement so that the party that nominated him or her is in power and can name a replacement. If that holds, then Ginsburg and Breyer, who were nominated by Democratic President Bill Clinton, would retire only if Obama wins. Scalia and Kennedy, both nominated by Republican President Ronald Reagan, would step down only if Romney wins.

Things don't always go as planned, however, and that's when the court's balance can change dramatically.

Liberal Justice Thurgood Marshall, nominated by Democratic President Lyndon Johnson, was forced to retire in 1991 due to poor health during the administration of

Republican George H.W. Bush, who replaced Marshall with conservative Clarence Thomas.

Marshall died two years later. Marshall had voted with the pro-*Roe* majority in 1973, and Thomas has since gone on record as opposing *Roe*.

Chief Justice William Rehnquist passed away in 2005 while in office, although his death did not have an impact on the court's ideological balance because he was nominated by a Republican (Richard Nixon) and his successor (John Roberts) was nominated by a Republican (George W. Bush).

If 2004 Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry had defeated Bush, though, the court's balance could have been impacted.

Lorence said if Obama wins reelection, "I think we could see a stronger likelihood of Breyer and Ginsburg retiring, but all that would be doing is swapping a younger liberal justice for an older liberal justice."

If Romney wins, he'd potentially have the opportunity to appoint a replacement for Scalia or Kennedy. Naming Kennedy's successor could have huge legal ramifications because he has been a swing vote on several major cases. He is the one pro-*Roe* justice who, if he sticks with tradition, will be replaced by a Republican president.

The five younger justices, barring a health issue or something unexpected, likely won't retire soon. Two were nominated by Republican presidents: Thomas (64) and Roberts (57). Two were nominated by a Democrat: Sonia Sotomayor (58) and Elena Kagan (52).

Chief Justice Roberts famously provided the fifth vote to uphold the health care law known as Obamacare, but Lorence still considers him a conservative on "99%" of the issues.

Don't ignore world hunger

By Wanda S. Lee
Correspondent

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Her face was drawn, sallow, and dirty. She was standing quietly in a line outside the local mission with her siblings, hoping for a piece of bread, a cup of soup, and maybe something to drink.

Beyond the glazed look in her eyes was a body that had ceased to grow and mature properly, and a mind that had lost the ability to learn and think clearly. Where will she find hope that one day her life will be better than what she is experiencing today?

This story is repeated around our nation and the world as people face day after day with a lack of the basic necessities of life — food, clothing, and shelter.

While the economic outlook appears discouraging to many of us, it has become a life-and-death issue for others. Human services stretched beyond capacity, continued high unemployment, and rising fuel costs leading to higher food prices are having a significant impact on everyone trying to help those in need.

According to a report from the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund:

- One billion people in the world do not have enough to eat.
- Every day, nearly 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes. That is one child every five seconds.
- In 2008, nearly three million children died before they reached their fifth birthday due directly or indirectly to hunger and malnutrition.
- In the United States, 49 million people struggle with hunger, including 17 million children.
- An estimated 35% of poor families in the United States are forced to choose between buying food and paying their rent or mortgage.
- In our nation's cities, one in every four people in a soup kitchen line is a child.

What can we do? First, let's educate ourselves about the reality of hunger in our communities and offer to help. Local food banks, church food pantries, and Baptist mission centers have the infrastructure and the expertise to address long-term and short-term hunger needs. They often need willing hands to help collect, pack and distribute food boxes.

Second, be a good steward of available resources by sharing with those who have great need. There are many good, local food ministries that need financial help, including the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund. One hundred percent of all contributions to this fund are designated to feed hungry people. Administrative costs are covered from other sources, including Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program.

Let's stretch every dollar as we seek to alleviate the pain of hunger. Working together, we can make a difference in feeding hungry people.

Matthew 25 reminds us that as followers of Christ we must help when it comes to hunger issues. After hearing His teaching on the parable of the talents, the people asked Jesus, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and give you a drink?" And He answered by saying, "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:37, 40).

During the month of October, churches are being asked to raise awareness of the hunger needs here at home and around the world. Let's be sure we do our part to minister to the "least of these" as we join the fight against hunger.

Lee is executive director-treasurer of national Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham. On Oct. 14, Southern Baptists will observe World Hunger Sunday and congregations across the United States will receive offerings for the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund. Since its inception in 1974, Southern Baptists have given more than \$235 million through the fund. For information on the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund, visit worldhungerfund.com.



LEE

The other day I received an email that was sent to Jim Futral and the sender's name and information was in Chinese. I neither read nor speak Chinese, but then this message in English popped up on my computer screen which said, "This message has no content." I did not waste all day thinking about what a Chinese address, my name, and "this message has no content" was all about, but neither could I just dismiss it and forget about it. In fact, the more I thought about it the more I thought about messages that have no content. I thought about how many times I had heard people speak and their message had no content. Painfully, I thought about the times that I had preached and my message had no content.

There is a fascinating incident in II Samuel 18 that describes a battle that had taken place between David's army and the rebellious army of his son, Absalom. One of the messengers near the battle wanted to go back and tell David about the battle. Ahimaaz wanted to run and spread the news, but he was not the chosen one. A Cushite was chosen and sent to David with the message from the battlefield. The only problem was that Ahimaaz decided that he would go anyway and he took off running and passed the Cushite. He arrived at the king's palace first and when he was asked to give the message, one translation records his response as, "I don't know." He had a message with no content and he did not know. Later the Cushite arrived and told King David that his army had won and that Absalom, his son, was dead.

There is a great lesson that can be



Meaningless Message

learned by all of us who preach, teach, or serve in places of responsibilities where we share the Word of God. We should examine ourselves as to whether our message has no content. It is easy for listeners to think that the job of preparation and delivery of a lesson or a sermon is simple but that is not the case at all. I know pastors who agonize every day studying, praying, searching, and digging to find the right words to share a message from God's Word Sunday after Sunday. I know Sunday School teachers who have full-time jobs, fulltime families, fulltime extra curricular activities, and several fulltime lives paralleling each other all week who spend endless hours thinking about and desiring to share the Word of God with effectiveness, compassion, and power. It is not an easy task. They desperately do not want to have a message that has no content.

Many years ago there was a preacher who came to the pulpit and simply

said, "I have nothing to say!" I am sorry, but while you may want to say that, there is something to say. I suppose the reason why most of us struggle with it so is not that we do not study and desire to be the best that we can be at that moment, but it is because we want to take the wonder of what we do have from God and week by week seek to package it with some degree of freshness. The content that we have in basic form never changes in that God has made us for a purpose. Our own sin, rebellion, and refusal messes up His plan, but He loves us so much that He wanted to redeem us, save us, and rescue us from that ruined direction of life. He sent His Son, Jesus, to pay for our sin debt and give us a new life. The glorious message is that whosoever believeth in Him can be saved. Then new life and a life that is full and abundant can be experienced in Jesus.

That is the content and yet several times a week many of God's choice

servants who are preaching and teaching are called on to communicate that message loaded with that content in a way that many of the hearers will be searching for and in a way that they have never heard it before. The message stands on its own, but oftentimes it is essential that we find some way to break through the clutter of other noises so that the voice of God can be heard and so that we will not appear to be standing with a blinking light on our head that says, "This message has no content."

All of us can be enticed into the trap of thinking that we must come up with some new, clever, mind-blowing, and astonishing insight to truth and the way of sharing it every day and every week. In this day of unending avalanches of information, glitz, and glamour even if we find a profound truth it must be wrapped in bells and whistles, lights and foghorns. It must be plastered on huge screens and cause your ears to tingle and your eyes to bulge. Otherwise, it will not have an impact on people. In fact, no one will listen. Yet there are times when we get so caught up in those things that we miss the awesome, life changing moment when from the darkness of an inner cell the simple, wonderful, hopeful Word comes from the lips of the Apostle Paul who said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31). The content of that message not only changed a man's heart but his family and his future. It still does!

The author can be contacted at jfutral@mbcb.org.

Staff Changes



COILA CHURCH, CARROLL ASSOCIATION, has called Perry Irvin as pastor Aug. 12. Jimmy Everett was ordained as a deacon Sept. 30. Shown are Irvin, Everett, Audine Everett, and Mike Wiltshire.

CALVARY CHURCH, HATTIESBURG, has called Tim Forsythe as Minister of Youth/Education. He comes to Calvary from First Church, Estill Springs, TN. Shown are Forsythe and his wife, Kelly, and son, William.



BEULAH CHURCH, DECATUR, has called Gary Rivers as pastor. He is shown with his wife, Dixie.

Revivals & Homecomings

► **Ethel Church, Ethel:** Homecoming, Oct. 21, 10:30 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Joey Barnard, pastor and speaker.

► **New Goodhope Church, Pulaski:** Homecoming, Oct. 21, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch; Bob Smith, speaker.

► **Macedonia Church, Mendenhall:** Revival, Oct. 21-24; Sun., 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Clarence E. Young, speaker; Joe & Janet Styron, music; David Jager, pastor.

► **First Church, Oloh, Sumrall:** Homecoming, Oct. 21, 10 a.m., followed by potluck dinner on the grounds; Glenn Davis, speaker; Daniel Lee, music.

► **Kilmichael Church, Kilmichael:** Homecoming, Oct. 21, 10 p.m., followed by potluck lunch and fellowship.

► **Chunky Church, Chunky:** 47th homecoming Oct. 21; services, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Robert Rowzee, speaker; T.R. Darsey, music.

► **Mt. Vernon Church, Newton:** Homecoming, Oct. 21; worship, 10:45 a.m. followed by fellowship lunch; Kenneth Harrison, speaker.

► **Galilee Church, Rockport:** Homecoming, Oct. 21; 4 Eternity performing, 10 a.m.; services, 11 a.m., followed by dinner on the ground; James Messer, speaker; Wallace Clark, pastor.

> **Web Of Lies**

A live performance at
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HOUSE

Party, Person or Principles?

Election day, November 6th, is fast approaching. To say your vote will decide the future of America for the next century is not that far-fetched. As Vice President Joe Biden suggested in his debate, the president will possibly recommend one or two Supreme Court judges during the next term. If he is correct, then we must ask ourselves, "Who do we want recommending the next Supreme Court judges?" Will it be our current president or will it be Mitt Romney? How will you decide?

In most elections the electorate is influenced by numerous factors. The first is by party affiliation, Democrat or Republican. Many will vote straight party no matter who the candidate is or what they have done. It matters not if they have a stellar record of community service or if they have just been released from jail. All that matters is the "D" or "R" after their name.

Is this the best criteria to use in determining your vote on the sixth of November? Absolutely not! Each party makes promises they will not and cannot keep. In 2008 the National Democratic Party along with candidate Barack Obama promised to lower the taxes on the middle class, cut the national deficit in half and reduce the unemployment rate. They have not succeeded. And

yes, the Republican Party has made promises and not kept them. Both parties are guilty as charged.

The second factor influencing how to vote is whether or not you like or dislike a particular candidate. These likes are often based not on policy but posture, not on the wisdom of his decisions but the width of his shoulders, not if he is well rounded in domestic and foreign affairs but how well rounded is his midsection, not if he is mature but if he is manly. For a female candidate the questions would be a bit different, but you get the general idea.

For some the overriding factor is the candidate's religious affiliation. When John F. Kennedy was running for president, many thought a Catholic could not be elected. Our former presidents have represented numerous religious organizations. Religious affiliation does not ensure their success or failure. We have had Baptists who have not been good presidents. Religion is a factor but it should not be the only factor. Fellow Christians, we are electing a president and

not a pastor on November 6th.

Even though party and person will influence me, to vote responsibly I must consider principle. As a Christian I must consider the core values of the candidate and also of their party. To understand what greatly impacts the way a candidate governs, read their official party platform. A candidate has a propensity to tilt their decisions toward their party's platform.



with Jimmy Porter

There are significant differences between the governing principles of Democrats and Republicans which are highlighted in the "2012 Democrat and Republican Party Platform Comparison Guide." This document can be viewed and downloaded from our web site at www.christianaction.com under "Legislation and Politics." This comparison guide is free and can be photocopied and distributed among your church community.

This comparison guide is a synopsis of the stance of each party on Civil Rights, The Economy, Energy, Gun Rights, Faith and Religious Liberty, Health Care, Human Life Issues, Immigration, Israel, Social Security and Medicare plus several more topics. This is a must-read to be informed. Below are two

significant differences between both parties which relate to our Christian values: sanctity of marriage and sanctity of life.

First, the Republican Party supports defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman, and the Democratic Party supports same-sex "marriage" and repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act.

In response to the pro-homosexual "marriage" agenda and President Obama's support of same-sex "marriage," a group of African-American faith leaders have announced a campaign aimed at stripping 25% of the African-American vote that went to Obama in 2008. Why would they do such a thing? The Coalition of African-American Pastors (CAAP) says they are dismayed at the president's support for same-sex marriage. They say, "It is an offense to the African-American community especially when he (President Obama) equates gay rights to civil rights."

Furthermore, Dr. Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., commented ".... we fully intend to shift 25 percent of the black vote from the 2008 election by charging every voter to examine each candidate and vote for the one that supports their core belief in natural marriage" (www.dailycaller.com). The CAAP is urging black voters to abide by their conscience and their faith. That is

good advice for all of us regardless of race, color, or party affiliation.

The second significant difference relates to abortion. Democrats and our current president support abortion-on-demand and partial-birth abortion. In addition, as an Illinois state senator in 2003 Pres. Obama voted against the Born-Alive Infants Protection bill (Senate Bill 1082). This bill would have given babies who survive a botched abortion the legal right-to-life. Let me say it so you do not misunderstand—according to Pres. Obama's vote, if a baby survives a botched abortion, then there should be no legal nor moral obligation to save and protect the life of this baby. The Republican Party, on the other hand, opposes abortion-on-demand, as does Gov. Mitt Romney except in cases of rape, incest and to save the life of the mother.

Go vote on November 6th and please consider the direction of our country. This election will mark our nation for decades to come. For further information, call us at the Christian Action Commission at 601-292-3329.

Porter serves as executive director-treasurer for the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. He can be contacted at 601-292-3332 or jporter@christianaction.com.

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WALTHAM BAPTIST CHURCH (WEBSTER CO) IS LOOKING FOR A PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER. If interested you can: Phone: 662-258-3259. Email: maramaga@yahoo.com. Send resume to: Waltham Baptist Church, P.O. Box 366, Waltham, MS 39771

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THE MUSIC SEARCH COMMITTEE OF STAR BAPTIST CHURCH IS NOW ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A FULL-TIME WORSHIP LEADER. Please send them to starbaptist-resumes@gmail.com

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THE TRI-COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IS RECEIVING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF ASSOCIATE ASSOCIATIONAL MISSIONS DIRECTOR. Resumes may be sent to tricityexec@gmail.com or P.O. Box 350, Columbia, MS 39429.

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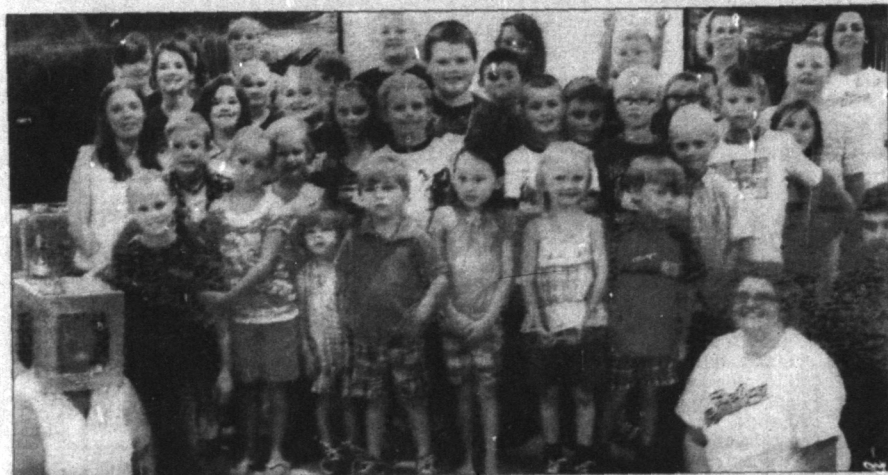
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Just for the Record



CONCORD CHURCH, BENTON-TIPPAH ASSOCIATION, held Vacation Bible School July 9 - 13, with an enrollment of 68. Debbie Kennedy, director. Shown are the participants.



SPRING HILL CHURCH, WATERFORD, recently licensed Jessie Russom to the gospel ministry. Shown are John Parker, Russom, Renee Russom, Lauren Russom and Jessica Russom.



MACEDONIA CHURCH, MYRTLE, ordained Tommy Turner as deacon Sept. 30. Shown are Pam Turner, Turner, and pastor Louie Williams.

In other Church News:

► **Riverside Church, Money**, is having a youth fest Oct. 27, beginning at 5 p.m. Activities include a haunted house.

► **Trinity Church, Vicksburg**, is hosting its fourth annual Women's Weekend of Renewal Nov. 2 - 3. Cost, \$25. Beth Moore video study; Joyful Praise Quartet, music; Judge Mary Libby Payne, teaching two sessions. For more information, call (601) 636-8121.

► **Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth**, is having a God and Country Day Oct. 28. Special recognition for active and fallen soldiers; Judge Roy Moore, speaker.

► Handbell artist Christine D. Anderson will host a handbell festival at **First Church, Aberdeen**, Oct. 27, with group concert at 3 p.m. Solo concert at The Elkin Theater, 7 p.m.; offering received. For more information, call (662) 436-0182 or email HandbellsInAberdeen@yahoo.com.

► **First Church, Vicksburg**, exceeded its \$11,300 goal for the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering by receiving \$17,915. Kay Lee, Women on Missions director.

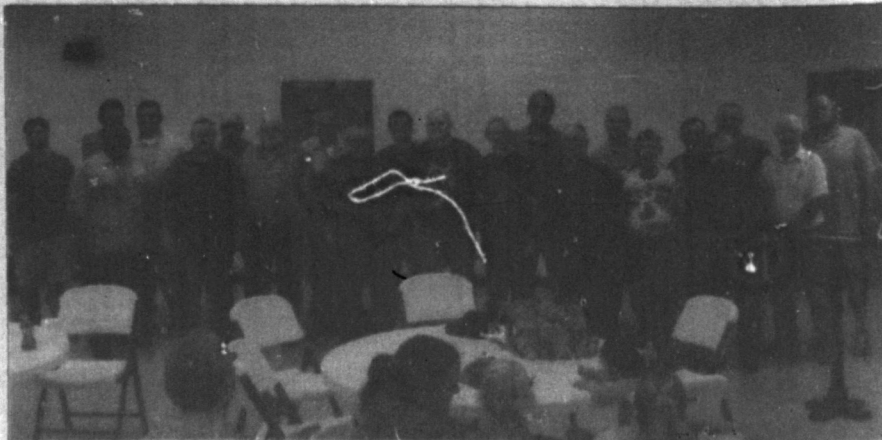
► **Pelahatchie Church, Pelahatchie**, will host Spoken 4 Quartet Oct. 20, 6 p.m. Love offering. For more information, call (601) 260-7114.



VICTORY CHURCH, LINCOLN ASSOCIATION, ordained Erik Moak to the ministry Apr. 15. Moak is serving as pastor to Serepta Church, Meadville. Shown are Misty Moak, Moak, and pastor Thomas Wicker.



FIRST CHURCH, TREMONT, ordained Frank Yielding and Tony North as deacons Sept. 9. Shown are pastor Matthew Russell, Yielding, and North.



THE MEN OF SILVER CREEK CHURCH, MCCOMB, held their first annual fish fry Oct. 6, sponsored by the deacon body.

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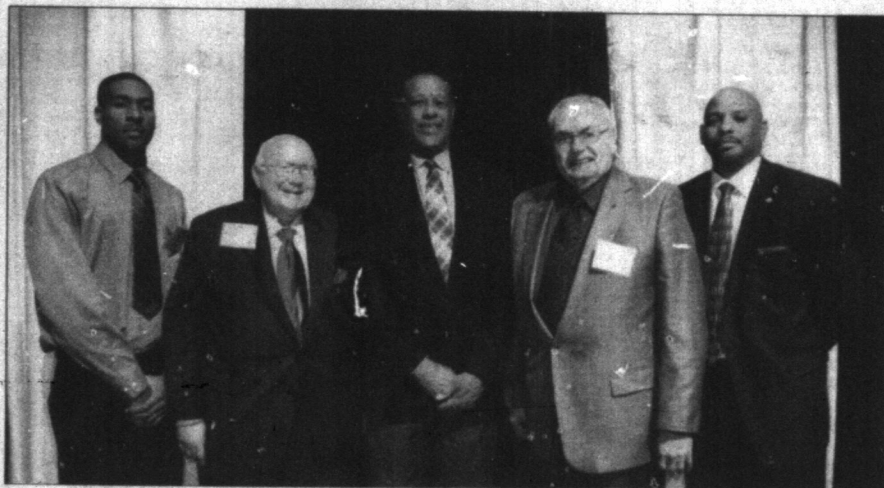
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College News



WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY hosted the 79th annual Mississippi Association of Colleges and Universities (MAC) Conference Oct. 1 - 2. James Doss, a senior William Carey University basketball player from Flora; Tommy King, president of William Carey University and the president for MAC; M. L. Carr, former NBA player, entrepreneur, and philanthropist; Clyde Muse, president of Hinds Community College and the incoming president for MAC; and Alfred Rankings, Jr., assistant commissioner for academic and student affairs for the Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) and secretary-treasurer, pose on stage immediately following the Halbrook Awards. Doss gave the invocation for the luncheon, and Carr served as the keynote speaker.



In other College News:

➤ Homecoming at **Mississippi College** will be held Oct. 25 - 27. For complete information, contact Lori Bobo at (601) 925-3252 or stop by her office for a free homecoming booklet. She can also be reached at lbobo@mc.edu.

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE president Lee Royce and his wife, Rhoda, are the recipients of the Award of Excellence at MC, to be presented during a special dinner Oct. 26 at Anderson Hall, 6 p.m.

Truth is not relative.

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

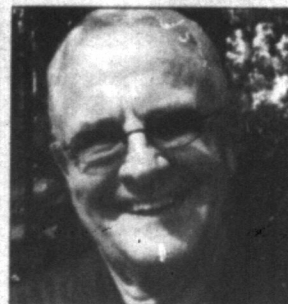
Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

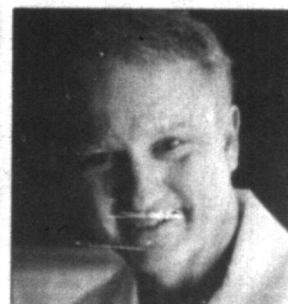
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



ELLIS



MAXWELL

A retired Baptist pastor with more than four decades of experience, Gowan Ellis, Sr. of Clinton will be the recipient of **MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE'S** Order of the Golden Arrow Award at homecoming weekend, as will MC alumnus Dr. Sam Maxwell, a radiologist with St. Jude Medical Center in Fullerton, California and 1973 graduate of Harvard Medical School. The Order of the Golden Arrow honors alumni or friends of the college who have made outstanding achievements in their professions, businesses or careers. The award recognizes exceptional performance or leadership beyond the ordinary. Ellis will share the honor with Maxwell, including an awards dinner and a ride in a parade through Clinton. The awards dinner will be at 6 p.m. on October 26 in Anderson Hall.

BOOTCAMP

cont. from p. 1

movement throughout the Mid-South. Through an intensive application and assessment process, the network seeks to provide church planters with internships, coaching, networking, and resources.

According to material provided by the ONES Network, "The South boasts the most religious population in America. However, in Mississippi alone, 70% of the population is unchurched. Many of these people know about Jesus, having often been raised in the church, but fail to recognize Him as the true means of salvation. In a sense, the unchurched in the South have been inoculated by the religious culture in which they were raised, a culture that has often put more emphasis on being righteous rather than being found righteous in Christ."

George Ross, Lead Pastor at Lifepoint Church in Senatobia, is director of the ONES Network.

"The Network was birthed out of churches that had a like-minded passion to plant churches," Ross said. "We meet; David Michel (Associate Executive Director, Mission Strategy, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board) has had us come together in church planting think tank meetings. We'd been thinking about a network for years. During that time over the years we dialogued and put together the network with the approval and acceptance of the state convention. We think it's a great thing for the convention to have these young guys plugged in to state convention life. Our planters are required to go to the state convention. We want these guys to understand they have to take up the mantle."

Scott Hanberry is minister of education at Longview Heights Church and on the ONES Leadership Team. "Boot Camp is designed, first and foremost, to encourage networking among planters and pastors, to champion the cause of the Great Commission, to help pastors of established churches to see the need for church planters, as well as to encourage our planters to be focused on the right things," Hanberry said. "We had tremendous response. The theme of this camp centered on the idea of resowing the gospel in the religious South. It's the idea of contextualization — we talk about reaching lost people, but we have lots of lost people in our churches. We want our people to have a heart for lost

people — we get caught up in our own little ministries and church planting is one way to overcome that."

"One of the best ways to seal someone into lostness is to baptize them into a false gospel," Hanberry said. "People pray a prayer, walk through some religious function, and they're never saved. It's like being inoculated with a vaccine. What happens is that they check out of church because there is no fruit in their lives."

The boot camp included Russell Moore, Tony Merida, and Danny Singuefield as featured speakers, plus over 30 breakout sessions and a host of other leaders, including Jerry Rankin speaking on spiritual warfare.

"One thing we want planters to see, especially the young leaders, is that there is still relevance in Baptist work," Hanberry said. "It is critical for them to maintain our Baptist identity and yet contextualize the methods used to reach their communities. They don't have to walk away from their Baptist heritage to be relevant to today's culture. They can be doctrinally sound and culturally relevant."

"ONES has some uncompromising core values," Hanberry continued. "Biblical integrity is crucial. Church planters can speak a different language, and we have to learn it. One of the reason we do boot camp is because we come together, and we want pastors to see church planters as not being a threat, or uncooperative, or in competition with each other. In Desoto County, for example, if every church was filled to absolute capacity, it would be such a small percentage of the overall population. Some have said that the churches would only have 12-15% of the population, maxed out. We have to plant more churches and different kinds of churches and it has to be an ongoing process."

This was the third year of the ONES bootcamp. Attendance has doubled each year.

"I want Joe Q. Baptist in Mississippi to reach back into his mind to a time when he was lost," Hanberry said. "Someone shared the gospel with him, took time to invest and tell him the story. He embraced it and was saved. Church planting is a multiplication of that storytelling. If he does embrace the gospel and gets excited about being saved, he will get excited about church planting in Mississippi. Partnership in church planting is something that is available to every single Baptist church in the state."

2012 Speakers' Tournament Winners



BAPTIST COLLEGE DIVISION, from left: Andrew Wilson, Meadow Grove Church, Brandon, finalist; Maegan Hall, Broadmoor Church, Madison, finalist; Lakelyn Taylor, First Church, Long Beach, fourth place; MacKenzie Whaley, Pine Grove Church, Hickory Flat, third place; Allie Vance, Hillcrest Church, New Albany, second place; and Maddison Rose Douglas, Longview Heights Church, Hernando, first place.



AT-LARGE DIVISION, FROM LEFT: Aaron Aslom, First Church, Philadelphia, second place; William McCrary, III, Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, third place; and Rebecca Vanderford, Union Church, Brandon, first place.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are

not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either e-mail, CD or DVD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

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Southern Baptists enter fray over Obamacare contraceptive mandate

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) religious freedom entity has joined the legal battle against the Obama administration's abortion/contraception mandate in the first case to reach a federal appeals court.

The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), headquartered in Nashville, signed on to a friend-of-the-court brief filed Oct. 12 that asked a federal appeals court to reverse the dismissal of two lawsuits against the controversial requirement under the 2010 health care law.

The brief supports challenges by Wheaton College, an evangelical Christian school in suburban Chicago, and Belmont Abbey College, a Roman Catholic institution in North Carolina, to the mandate that employers provide workers with health insurance that covers contraceptives and abortion-causing drugs.

The ERLC and 10 other evangelical organizations joined by invitation in a brief filed by Christian Legal Society (CLS) in support of the colleges' appeal on religious

liberty grounds to the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals. More than 35 suits have been brought against the mandate, but the D.C. Circuit is the first appeals court to consider such a challenge. Oral arguments will not be held until after the final briefs are filed in mid-November.

Though resistance to the mandate has been portrayed widely as Catholic in nature, ERLC President Richard Land said the case demonstrates the opposition is much more diverse than one religious body.

"This particular case is vitally important both because of the nature of the appeal concerning a very narrow definition the government is following for religious employers and secondly because of who is involved in the suit," Land said on Oct. 15. "One of the most prestigious evangelical colleges in the world in Wheaton College — of which Billy Graham is a graduate — is one of the participants in the suit, which demonstrates this is not 'just' a Catholic issue, but it is an issue of religious

CWJC

cont. from p. 1

mentor men through CMJC.

Established in 2008, CWJC of Philadelphia offers a variety of classes and services including Bible study, Jobs for Life, computer basics, budget training, and a clothes closet with clothing appropriate for job interviews.

Sandi Lewis, site coordinator since 2008, said while there are other computer and skills training programs in the area, CWJC is unique due to the one-on-one mentoring of the women. "We also use the Jobs for Life curriculum," Lewis said. "It is biblically-based so it addresses issues that [other skills training] programs do not."

Lewis said the grant that accompanies the award will be used to purchase additional GED resources and computer tables for the nine computers that students use during classes. Currently, the computers are on tables that are too high to comfortably use in an hour-long class.

"There are enough roadblocks to overcome for our ladies," she explained, "and having them practice computer skills at desks that are at the correct level will make the process easier and more comfortable."

God is at work in each of these ministries and in Philadelphia, said Lewis, who pointed out that she can see God being faithful to complete the work He began. Over the past year, certified educators to lead job and computer skills training, financial gifts, educational tools, and most importantly, committed mentors and volunteers have been provided.

"Being a mentor at CWJC has meant that I have had the awe-

some privilege of being involved with women as they begin to see and experience the beautiful life that God has planned to them," said Roberta Byars, who serves as a Bible instructor and mentor at the site. "I have watched them grow closer to God and gain confidence in themselves."

Mary Watkins came to CWJC of Philadelphia a year ago as a participant and described it as "one of the greatest experiences I ever had in a learning setting." Impressed with the volunteer leaders and ministry, Watkins completed the program and became a volunteer.

She recently completed a 13-week training class that is required to be a mentor and now serves in that capacity.

Serving in CWJC is also a special calling for Lewis, who retired in January 2011 after 20 years of working full-time in the insurance business to spend more time serving in ministry.

"I saw the ladies and the ministry needed more attention than I could give while working," Lewis said. "I believe in CWJC as a ministry that can really reach and meet at need. I am sure this is where God wants me to be."

Jean Roberson, national WMU ministry consultant who oversees the CWJC/CMJC ministry, presented the outstanding site award to Lewis at the recent Mississippi WMU annual meeting.

To learn more about CWJC or to find a CWJC site in your area, contact Tammy Anderson, Mississippi WMU Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3323 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 323. E-mail: tanderson@mccb.org. Web site: mccb.org.

SHEA

cont. from p. 2

with Muslim blasphemy laws would be to undermine our democracy, the rule of law, the free exchange of ideas and our way of life. The West once privileged Christianity in this way and the ensuing religious wars and political oppression led America's founders to enact the First Amendment.

A serious and respectful American policy response to the Muslim demand for Western blasphemy bans is long overdue. President Obama's U.N. speech was only that: a single speech. It was unsupported by his specific foreign policies. His administration has failed to lead a diplomatic effort among our Western allies to rally support for the rights of the individual to freedom of speech and religion, and has neglected to stand up for such freedoms in its overall foreign policy. We should lead a sustained conversation articulating the importance of individual freedoms of speech and religion to democracy and to economic advancement, personal as well as societal.

We should firmly assert that we do not — and will not — regulate speech on behalf of any religion or body of ideas. We should appeal for the freedom of specific blasphemy prisoners abroad and expose the injustices and due process lapses surrounding their cases. We should defend the religious minorities that are oppressed in — and in danger of being driven from — Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Mali and parts of Nigeria. We should tell our allies among the OIC member states to end the stoking of outrage over blasphemy, including by the imams they appoint, register and fund.

And we should cite the words of courageous Muslim reformers themselves. One is the late Naser Abu-Zayd, who was driven out of his native Egypt for expressing such thoughts as this: "Charges of apostasy and blasphemy are key weapons in the fundamentalists' arsenal, strategically employed to prevent reform of Muslim societies and instead confine the world's Muslim population to a bleak, colorless prison of sociocultural and political conformity."

Shea, an international human rights lawyer, is director of the Center for Religious Freedom and a Senior Fellow at Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C. Since 1993, Shea has served as a Commissioner on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. This article first appeared in National Review, online at www.nationalreview.com. Used by permission. Reprinted here courtesy of Baptist Press.

JUDGEMENT HOUSE FINALLY FORGIVEN

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Clue: O = E

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Philippians Four: Four

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004. © 2005

NOONKESTER

cont. from p. 1

visiting accreditation teams.

Noonkester was a deacon of First Church, Hattiesburg, for many years and in retirement sang tenor in the Visionaires Choir. Most recently, he and his wife Naomi were members of University Church, Hattiesburg.

Noonkester received the doctor of laws degree from the University of Richmond, the Rust College Shield for Leadership in Education and Social Development, the Liberty Bell Award from the South Central Mississippi Bar Association, and the Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Baptist-affiliated Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain.

In 1982, he was named the Hattiesburg Sales and Marketing Executives Man of the Year. The following year he became the third recipient of the Hub Award. The J. Ralph Noonkester

Endowed Professorship, the J. Ralph Noonkester Scholarship at William Carey University and the Noonkester Park at Oak Hill Academy honor his memory.

In 2007, William Carey University named the Ralph and Naomi Noonkester School of Arts and Letters for him and for his wife Naomi who had served William Carey College faithfully as Registrar in the early days and later hosted receptions and public events in the president's home.

Noonkester was the son of the late Reggie Lee and Arcie Parks Noonkester. He was preceded in death by his brother Clarence Noonkester and his sister Judy Noonkester.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Naomi Hopkins Noonkester; sisters Loretta Crismond of Bedford, Va., and Kate Legard of Stuart, Va.; a son, Myron Noonkester of Hattiesburg; a daughter, Lila Noonkester of Greenwood, S.C.; and three grandchildren.

Noonkester's funeral service was held Oct. 4 at Main Street Church in Hattiesburg. Interment was at Highland Cemetery in Hattiesburg. Hulet-Winstead Funeral Home in Hattiesburg was in charge of arrangements.

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GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is carefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

SEPTEMBER 2012

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David Smith

Mrs. Joy B. Roberts

Mrs. Frances A. Smith

Ms. Mary Allen Varnell

Mr. Lamar Stanford

Rev. & Mrs. Jimmy

Breland

Shirley Stevens

Billy & Beverly Pyron

Brad Taggart

Mr. & Mrs. Bradley G. Hall

Delmar Thomas

Stanton BC, Natchez

Eddie Toney

Mrs. Billie Marie Rushing

Kay Townes

Frances & Rich

Defenbaugh

Ada Claire Walker

Ryan & Whitney Holmes

Stanley Warner

Carl & Eunice Woolery

Coy Watkins

Mrs. E. M. Lindsley

Mrs. Vernon Watkins

Clyde & Kitty Revette

Danny Wilkie

Ms. Marie S. Graham

Ernest & Dot Scruggs

Mr. Paul Williams

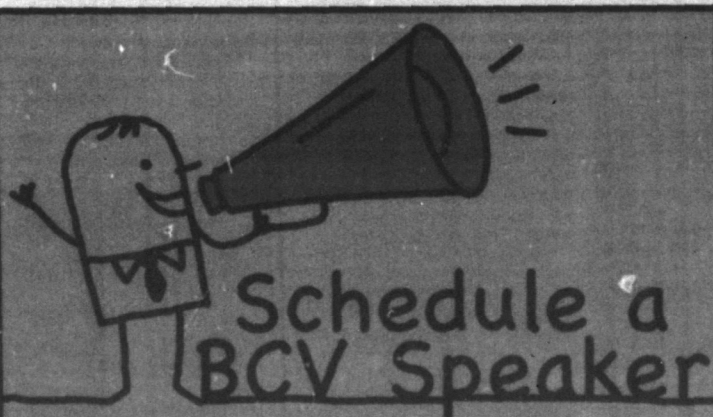
Clifton & Hope Porter

David Young

Mr. & Mrs. Danny R.

Young

David Franklin, Senior Class President at Hillcrest Christian School in Jackson, led the students to help The Baptist Children's Village by having a contest between classes to see who could collect the most items for the ministry during homecoming week. The Junior Class were the winners. David is pictured with Rory Lee, BCV Executive Director with the second of two loads delivered to The BCV from Hillcrest.



With your new church year beginning, now is a great time to schedule a speaker from The Baptist Children's Village to come share an update about the ministry as well and project ideas. We have staff that travel across the state that speak to groups of all ages and any one of them would be happy to come to visit with your church group.

Contact Celeste Cade at ccade@baptistchildrensvillage.com or 601-922-2242 to make arrangements.

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST PASTORS HAVE BEEN A CRITICAL BAPTIST CHILDREN'S VILLAGE PARTNER SINCE 1897

Our ministry is grateful for the investments you and others have made in our children and staff since we began 115 years ago.

It was a Mississippi Baptist Pastor from Senatobia who was our very first advocate. Rev. L. S. Foster presented the idea to fellow Baptist pastors and friends, and worked diligently to see the vision of this ministry become a reality. Today we continue, with the help of many more Mississippi Baptist pastors like yourself, to provide for the needs of children in an environment where they can experience God's love.

This month we celebrate you, and the sacrifices you have lead your church to make to ensure that this legacy continues. Thank you for your leadership and your faithfulness. We hope you will visit our booth at the Mississippi Baptist Convention October 29-30 2012.

Stop by The Baptist Children's Village Booth at the Mississippi Baptist Convention to pick up your thank you gift.

Living in Community • 1 Peter 4:1-11

Jesus lived, suffered, and died so that our sins could be forgiven and we could form a community of faith called "the family of God". The strength of a church to fulfill its mission: evangelizing sinners, edifying saints, and exalting the Savior lies in its ability to function as a God-like and God-led community.

"Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude..." (v. 1, NIV)

A healthy Christian community requires the attitude of Christ to prevail among its members. Our text provides three attitudes required to form and maintain a healthy Christian community.

1. BE DONE WITH SIN

"...he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. (v. 1b-2)

The Bible compares sin in the church to yeast which spreads throughout a whole batch of dough. Sin in the body of Christ spreads a negative impact throughout the body, infecting the fellowship. Sin creates division between those who commit it, those who defend it and those who oppose it. So the proper attitude toward sin for the Christian is "to be done with it". Every

Christian should resolve that sin in any form or fashion is not acceptable in his or her own life. It must be confessed and repented as soon as the Christian becomes aware of it before it causes damage and division within the body of Christ. Peter adds in verses 3-5 that every Christian has already "...spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do...but they will give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead."

2. BE CLEAR MINDED

"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray." (v. 7)

Someone has said "perception is reality". Is that true? In the sense that a person thinks their perception is correct, they will act on that perception. But does that mean their actions are right even if their perception was wrong?

In the parable of the talents, the servant who was given one talent hid his in the ground and did nothing with it because, he said, he "perceived" that his master was a harsh man and he was

afraid he would lose it. The servant who "perceived" his master as harsh was called "wicked", was stripped of his talent and cast into outer darkness.

We are charged by God, especially in a Christian community, to examine our perceptions and be sure they are correct before we act on them. We will be judged based on reality and our actions, not our perceptions.

Healthy Christian community requires that we be clear minded. Faulty

perceptions lead to faulty actions. The souls of men, women, boys and girls are at stake. No church can afford to let mis-

information and misperception be the basis of decisions. For the sake of your community, resolve to be clear minded. Resolve to verify your perceptions. Resolve to operate based on truth, not feelings. Don't give out mixed messages or operate with hidden agendas.

3. BE LOVING TOWARD ONE ANOTHER

"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins." (v. 8)

When a person can do no wrong in your eyes, you have a deep love for that person. When another person can do no right in your eyes, for some reason you have chosen to hate that person. A Christian community needs massive amounts of love to thrive, while hate is a poison in the water that will kill the community.

Peter gives three specific ways that Christians in community should express love to one another.

A. "...love covers over a multitude of sins" (v. 8b) - Overlook the shortcomings of others while correcting them in yourself.

B. "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling" (v. 9) - Lend a hand to help a fellow church member at a point of need.

C. "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others" (v. 10) - Every Christian has a motivational gift from God for serving or speaking.

...so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ." (v. 11)

When a church functions as a healthy community, the lost get saved, the saved grow to maturity, and God gets glorified! Halleluia! Amen!

Bishop is a member of Harrisburg Church, Tupelo.



Explore the Bible

with David B. Bishop

From Failure to Correction • Exodus 15:19-21; Numbers 12:1-3, 8-13, 15

A CRITICAL SPIRIT DENIES CONTENTMENT

We must not call into question God's character by praising His work on one hand and doubting His judgments on the other. A critical spirit taints relationships in all directions. Oftentimes we "church folks" criticize decisions made by church staff without knowing all the facts. Peace comes when we focus on God's purpose in the matter.

MIRIAM, THE PROPHETESS

EX. 15:19-21 - After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, we re-visit Moses and Aaron's sister Miriam, daughter of Jochebed and Amram. Some 80 years earlier, she played a key role in saving baby Moses' life, and in the subsequent Exodus into the wilderness, now is called a prophetess. Pharaoh's reign has successfully ended and Miriam calls upon Israel's women to celebrate with songs of praise and victory steeped in faith and gratitude. Oftentimes after victories, we find ourselves in a dry wilderness and no water in sight.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OF AARON AND MIRIAM

Numbers 12:1-3 advances the story and divulges the scheme of Aaron, the High Priest, and Miriam. Though fully engaged in the deliverance of God's people, they quarreled with Moses about his marriage(s?) with a Gentile, or that wife had far too much influence

upon Moses' choice of the elders. They surmised that Moses was monopolizing management of this great movement and denying them and others their just deserts.

Moses didn't seem to hear the grumblings or to have any resentments toward them, but God did and what an insightful and enchanting story we have of His resolution. It should get your ear. Not a bene.

GOD'S WAY OF DEALING WITH SIN (FAILURE) IN THE CAMP

Numbers 12:4-15 - God called them on the carpet. He showed up in a pillar of cloud and stood in the door. He summons Miriam and Aaron to come forth and tells them Moses is his faithful servant, so to him he speaks mouth to mouth. God asks "shouldn't you have been afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" Now they must consider who it was they had insulted. Don't abuse God's ministers, especially those as grandiose as Moses. The message was they were good but were not to pretend to be equal to Moses nor

start any rivalry with him. God was angry and he departed.

What a meeting! God not only cleared Moses, but praised him. Not only did he show Miriam and Aaron their faults, but proceeded to show them his displeasure. Those who are reviled and persecuted for righteousness sake have

a great reward coming. Christ will confess our love and honors before His father, but there is reason

given here to be afraid of reviling against God's servants.

His departure alone is a sure and sad token of God's displeasure with sin. He never departs without just cause and when God is absent, sin is alive and well. You must expect no good outside the presence of God. Moses once needed a veil to hide his glory and now Miriam needs a veil to hide her shame. She was instantly afflicted with leprosy. Aaron begged Moses to not let that happen to him (High Priest) as well though he confessed "we have done foolishly and sinned." With love Moses cried to the Lord, and the Lord

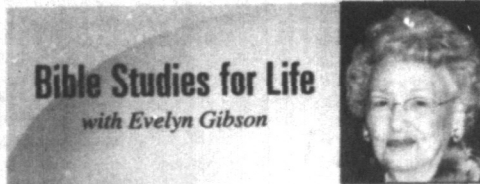
answered. Miriam must, however, be shut out from the camp seven days (normal cleansing time) while the nation was detained until she was legally restored. Sin always takes us further than intended, and the effects are astronomical. Note, God did not remove the cloud.

Aaron, the High Priest, humbled himself to Moses, confessed his faith and begged for pardon. He confesses both his and his sister's sin and speaks most respectfully to Moses. What a powerful example given here of the cause to pray for those who despitefully use you and not be amused with righteous punishment imposed by God or man.

MIRIAM RESTORED AND ENABLED TO SERVE GOD AGAIN

Miriam abused Moses for selfish reasons and was subsequently healed by his prayer for her. She is now chiefly remembered for her role as a leader. Can we connect with "Father, forgive them for they know not...?" God proves His mercy, justice, forgiveness, healing, love and wisdom in this great story. Be done with your critical propensities and focus on God for a more perfect understanding of who He is.

Gibson is a member of Monticello Church, Monticello.



Bible Studies for Life

with Evelyn Gibson

Just for the Record



The children's choir of **NEW HENLEY-FIELD CHURCH, PEARL RIVER COUNTY**, presented John's Druthers in the evening worship service July 22. Mara Davis and Ashley Lowe, directors.



GUM GROVE CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, ordained Hugh Mathis and Roy Dixon (shown) as deacons Sept. 23.

PRAIRIE CHURCH, PRAIRIE, ordained Claude Easter, Luke Jackson, and Ernie Tidwell as deacons Sept. 23. Shown are Easter, Judy Easter, Jackson, Michelle Jackson, Tidwell, and Geraldine Tidwell. George Collins, pastor.



NORTH MORTON CHURCH, SCOTT COUNTY, licensed Brian Kersh Massey, left, and Jessie L. Prestage, right, to the ministry Sept. 9. Gary Wyatt, pastor.



ROLLING CREEK CHURCH, QUITMAN, held a GA and Mission Friends recognition service Sept. 29. Shown are the participants.

The Mission Friends and GAs of **FIRST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA**, participated in Christmas in August.



BOGUE CHIT-TO INDIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, ordained Kendall Wallace as deacon Sept. 16. Shown, front row, are pastor Samuel Dixon, Wallace, wife Rachel, with daughters Kacie, Karson, and Malana; back row, Addie Martin, Charles D. Henry, and Billy Smith.



ETHEL CHURCH, ETHEL, held its first annual Salvation Celebration Aug. 19, recognizing those who have accepted Christ in the last year. The recognition was followed by a covered dish meal and inflatables for the children. Shown are those newly baptized.